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CANNON



1982

vol. 12 no. 4

Sid Bandstra (Sr.)
Business major

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Invocation

On such a day
as this,
confidence
flicks its tail once,
arches its back
and walks haughtily away;
self-discipline
stares balefully,
offers one mocking hiss,
and slithers through dried leaves
to curl in some dark corner;
and inspiration
blinks in startled annoyance,
twitches its wings and
sidesteps once before
settling back on its eggs.

Lynnette Pennings (Jr.)

English major

The distance between the artist and the audience depends on the artist and the audience. People from a Dutch, Reformed background don't have to do a lot of hard thinking to relate to Sietze Buning's poetry. For them to understand Picasso's cut-up bodies and faces, however, would take more effort unless they were steeped in the cubist movement.

The artist and audience stand most secure when coming from a specific, established background that understands and expects certain values. This rich background or set of traditional values may become stifling if it remains closed to critique and new input. Everyone knows that change is painful. Misunderstandings always arise and someone is bound to get mad at someone else. An art form you have never seen before is not incomprehensible if you take the time to understand from which angle the artist is coming. Most people, if their car doesn't start, look around for tools they may use to figure out what the problem is. An art piece that means nothing to you can be figured out if the right tools are used. That may mean listening to someone in that field, doing a little bit of reading, or going out and doing some looking.

You don't have to know what every artist is saying, but knowing the rules of one sport, having one favourite author, having one special friend, and understanding one artist, adds a richness to your life in that it relates something you already know to something that is still new and not quite understandable.

Anya R. Seerveld

Editor



Verne Meyer

Instructor in Theatre Arts
at Dordt College

Need a Window?

Diane Houtsma (Jr.)

Medical Tech. major

In an interview with Verne Meyer, the topic of the relationship between the artist and the viewer was discussed. The area of the theater was the main focus, but the ideas emitted can be integrated to all expressions of art, since the intention of art as a whole is audience observation.

There is oftentimes a rift between the performer and the audience. Verne can see several reasons for this. First of all, "the heritage of the reformed people has not viewed art as an integral and necessary part of life, but rather as a service effort we can do without. This is a philosophical problem," said Verne. "Art must be seen as a way of living." In Reformed circles, people tend not to understand the nature of the theater, which is to "provide a provocative experience. Art also has a questioning role."

A second reason for the breach between the performer and the audience is an elitism that can sometimes be expressed by the artist. Many times the artist feels his/her objectives and efforts are not appreciated and will respond by considering personal artistic objectives as being more notable and will detach self from those who have what the artist considers less lofty objectives.

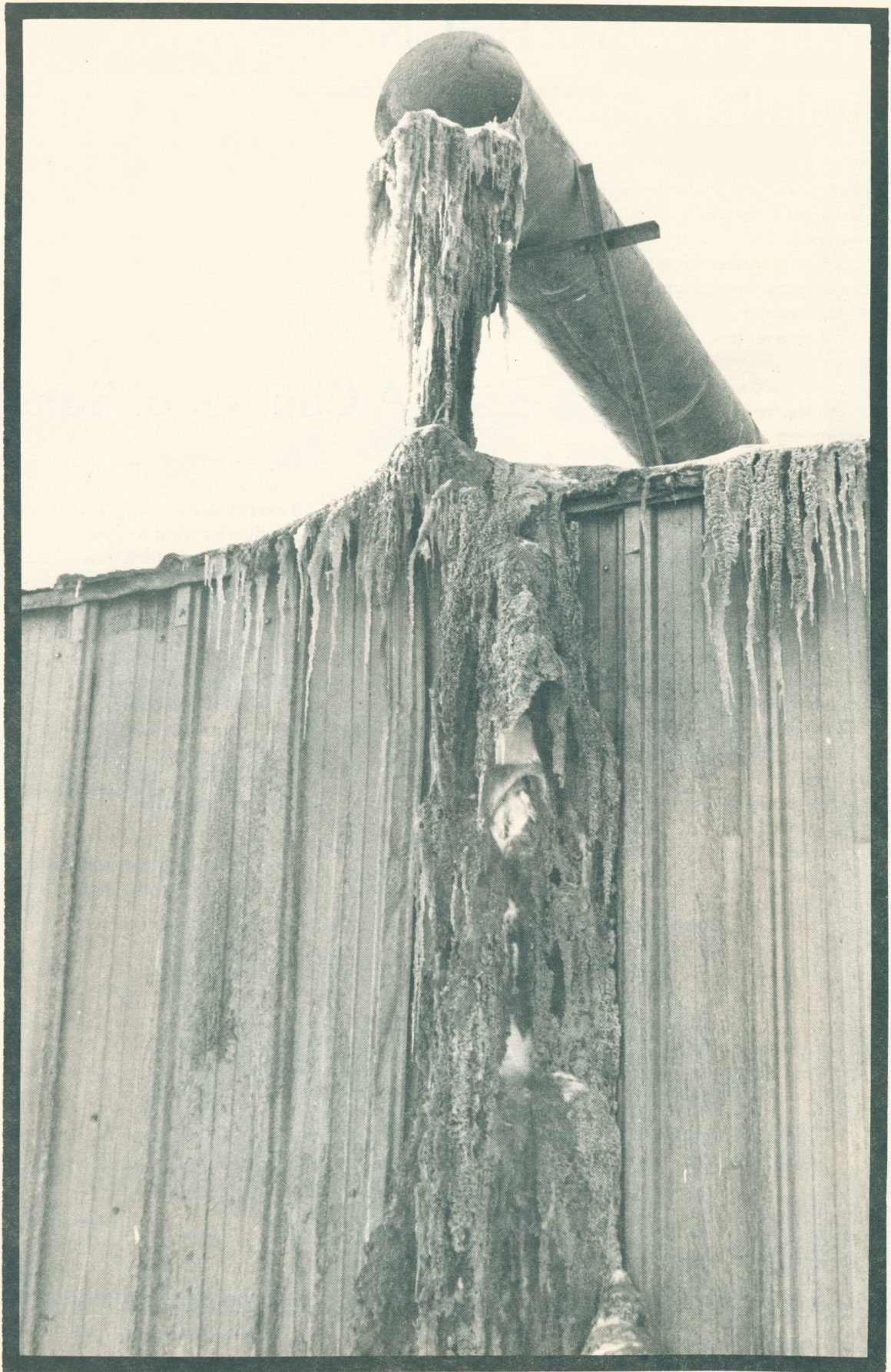
The very nature of art is also a cause of the rift. Verne explained that "art is an experience which cannot be clearly defined. The experience has no means of being measured objectively. If we try to weigh the value of art on objective criteria, we will have a problem. There should be no difference between the artistic study and the scientific study at Dordt. The difference is the non-cognitive concepts of art and the cognitive concepts of science."

Verne pointed out that the theater arts department at Dordt could be extremely popular with the general public simply by performing American musicals and plays that embrace the Reformed philosophical stand. There would not be benefits for either the audience or performers and individual potential would be smothered if only these types of productions were performed. We must question the form and content of art which is immediately popular.

In establishing standards for fine art, we must consider the efforts of the artist and the audience combined. According to Verne, the standards at Dordt for fine arts are set by faculty and students working together, along with community feedback. He points out that the Art departments at Dordt should take the leadership role because of their closeness to and education in the arts.

Attempts to close the breach are being made on the Dordt campus. After many of the one-act plays, opportunity for discussion is given. The purpose of these sessions is "to provide a forum for the audience and the artist to have a dialogue, to look at the art, to discuss what has been created, and to come to a better understanding of each other," said Verne. An encounter of this sort will point out the weaknesses and strengths of each group and lead to growth in the understanding of each of their roles in art.

"A great deal of love, respect, and trust is the key to closing the rift," commented Verne. "Audience and artist must have a desire to come together as creatures of the Lord to develop the potential and ability for the creativeness in all, to better understand each other, and to deal with art." Each group must make their contribution. There must be mutual respect and trust. The artist should not take the audience for granted and the audience must recognize their own artistic potential. By healing the breach, we can profit immensely and bring to actualization lives that could be filled to the fullest for the honor and glory of God.



Judy Cook (Sr.) Psych. major

20 Miles South of Heil, North Dakota, Population 24.

The lichen-green rattlesnake lies in the sun
on a road going somewhere
out in nowhere
ivory underbelly stained brown
by the tar seeping through sun-warmed asphalt
Ya can't kill a rattler
just by driving over it
Ya just can't do it says Marty
clutching the F1100 into fourth
as we climb Haffner's Hill
my aw-come-on
face breaking through
a wraith of cigarette smoke and August dust
dies as Marty yanks open the gas truck glovebox.
revealing celluloid rattles
framed by .22 shells
and bounty-killed gopher tails
I finger an obsidian-colored
thirteen buttoned rattle
button for each year says Marty
Comin' across a snake
I back up a ways
tromp on the gas
slammin the brakes as I hit the snake
red-black flesh
lies smeared open on a road
waiting for crows
from somewhere
out in nowhere
North Dakota

Daniel Zinkand (Sp.)
Pol. Sci. major

A Counter of Salami

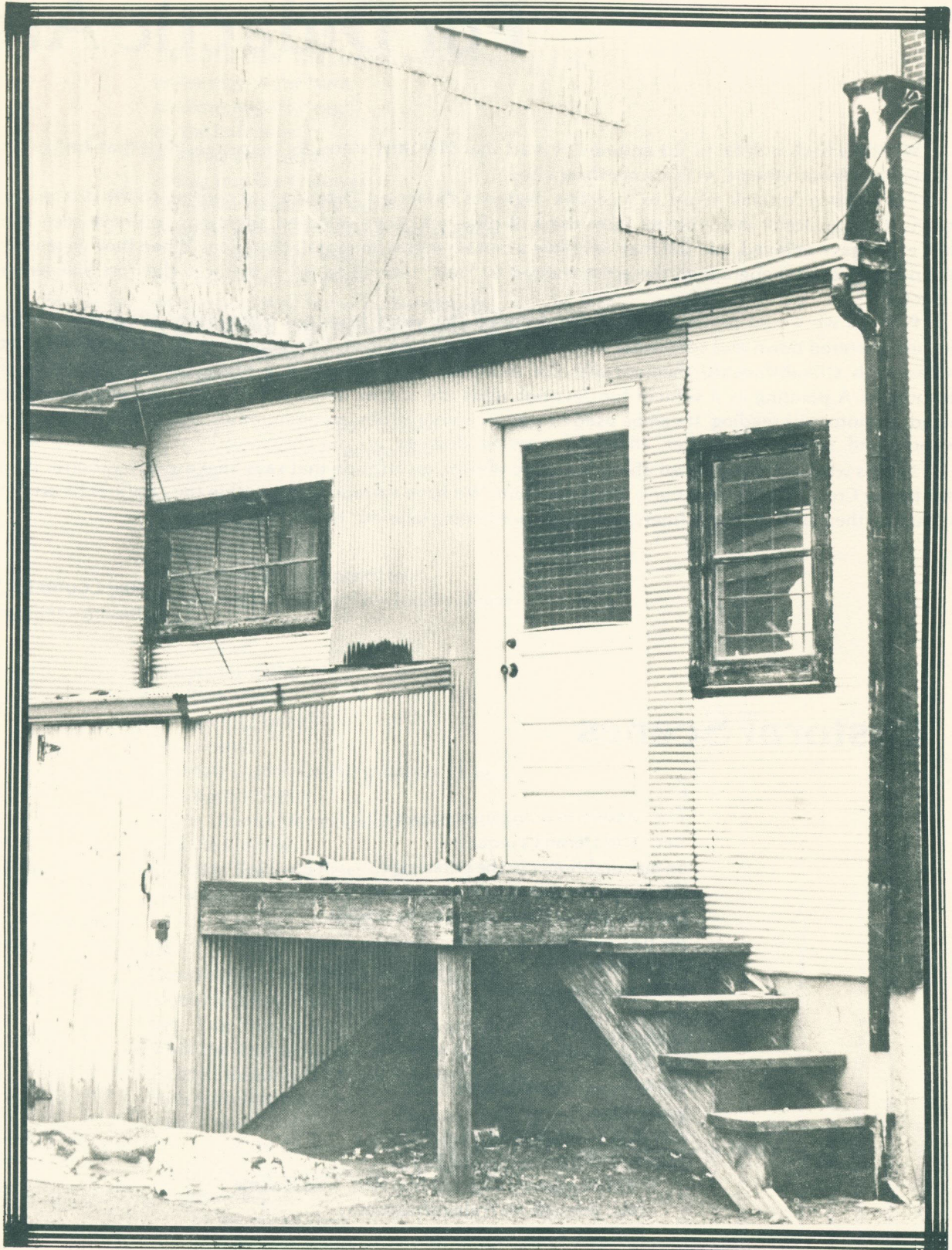
I wonder
as I walk down main street
if everybody has somebody
one doesn't want to meet;
somebody you duck into
a butcher's shop to avoid
and lean over a counter of
salamis and muenster cheese
to miss
while his steps hesitate
too near the open door
and you quickly call a clerk
and ask for three smoked
ring bolognas
that you don't need.

Lynnette Pennings (Jr.)
English major

Through a Glass

Time
clings limply to my mirror
like the final sighs from
an exhausted shower,
blurring the edges of last night's face
misting the features of tomorrow's
and, when I lean too close,
smearing the smile I expect to see
with flecks of toothpaste
and smudges of mascara.

Lynnette Pennings (Jr.)
English major



Michelle Vander Kooy (Jr.)
Elem. Ed. major

There Is A Place For Didactic Art

What the heck is didactic art anyway? Is it art that blatantly states its "message," is it that kind of art that has an obvious theme, or is it something else?

I'm inclined to think all art to a certain degree is didactic. "Didactic," according to the dictionary, means to inculcate or instil morals. Now think of plays you have watched, paintings you have seen and dance you have enjoyed, and did they not have a certain moral (immoral) direction? When they were written, painted, or choreographed the artist wanted to "say" something, so in this way they are somewhat didactic.

Perhaps we would be better off if we dropped this word from our vocabulary altogether. It has become watered down and somewhat meaningless today. However, I do believe there is a place for that art which is straightforward thematically. For example, I know there is a place for that art which is devotional. A painting as a vehicle for devotion adds life, a new dimension to what can sometimes be bland, monotonous reading. It can be used to explore social issues in communities, to question policies in schools and so on. Remember, there are varying degrees of straightforwardness to consider also.

I guess what I am concerned about is artistic elitism, an attitude that says Shakespeare is better than Huisken or Crush. That is pure bunk. He is different. We have various media within the confines of art; let us explore them and use them freely, without fear of being labeled "lukewarm" artists.

Ray Louter (Sr.)
Theatre Arts major

Pastoral Scenes

I
The consistory didn't understand
Rev. Van Heisma's request—
an air conditioner in the parsonage.
Oh it was hot there in the parsonage
hot enough for the August sun to crackle
the paint on the south side.
They knew.
They paid for painting it
every
September
but still
the Reverend needn't have
everything
and they told him so the next Monday.
Article 9 of the minutes for July 27:
"The consistory suggests that Rev. Van Heisma
bear through his trying situation.
Perhaps a fan would help."

II

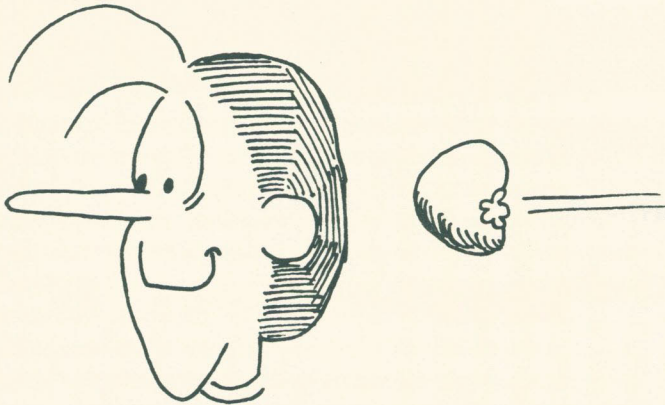
Tom and Peter Van Heisma were sitting
at the edge of the lawn
cracking egg after egg
on the hot cement
as Myna Deemsema
swung into the driveway
"Preacher's kids," she sniffed
stepping out of her refrigerated Lincoln.
"He's in the study. Walk in"
chorused Tom and Peter
when asked their father's whereabouts.
A fan-muffled "yes" followed her knock
Rev. Van Heisma
bare feet on the desk
swiveled—
expecting Tom and Peter in need
of ongoing "pastoral judgement"
but saw
Myna Deemsema's
dropping face
flaring red
redder than the sunburned legs
protruding from his yellow Jockey shorts
she stood
and bleated
"Thursday night
. . . Ruth Circle
. . . can you speak?"
he sat there
the chair's black leather suddenly cooling
his clammy flesh.
Myna Deemsema backed out of the house
into the Lincoln
and over Tom and Peter's eggs
yolks now turned green in the afternoon sun.

III

Consistory members licked their lips
as the clerk read the minutes from the last meeting.
Rev. Van Heisma peered intently at that evening's Bible passage
while the deacons spoke about the problem of the church's singles.
And the meeting of August 3 then concluded
with a maintenance item—
Article 18:
". . . \$276.58 from the building fund to be used for an air conditioner
in the parsonage study. No objections."
recorded
by the stated clerk
Arnold Deemsema

Daniel Zinkand (Sp.)
Pol. Sci. major

Noosebom



On April 22, 1982, Arnold Nosebom and Company will make their farewell to Dordt College and the Sioux Center community. After four years of controversy, satirical comment, and lousy jokes that some people never seemed to understand, Nosebom is going to graduate, the first and most likely the last cartoon character to win a B.A. degree from Dordt.

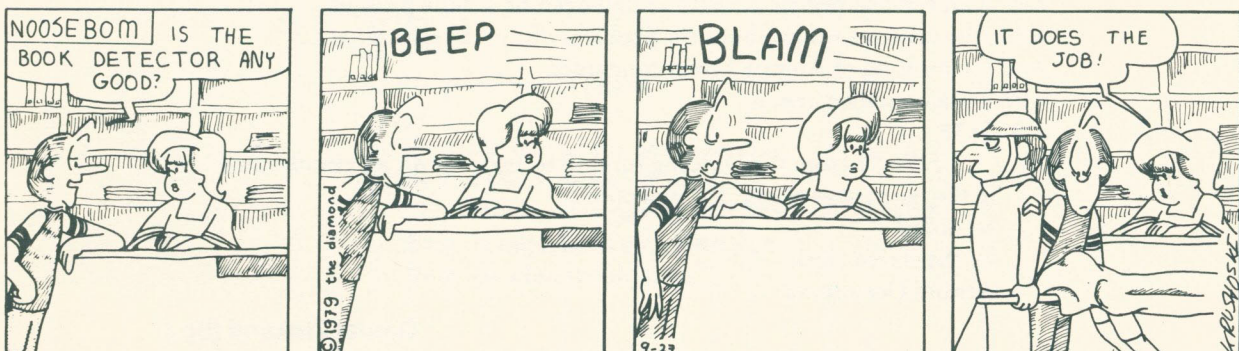
Arnold Nosebom (pronounced nōōsbām), a wimpy but lovable klutz stumbled into the Diamond in a scratchy scribble of a cartoon that set the tone of his impact on campus for the rest of his college career.



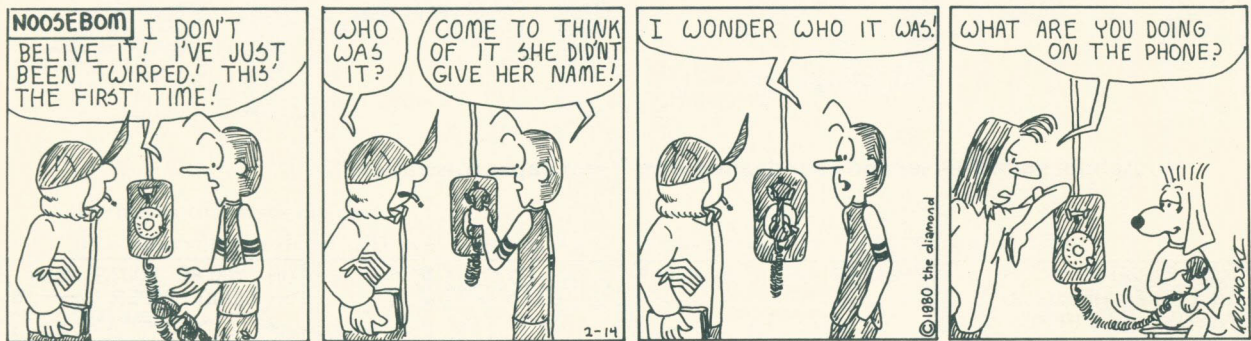
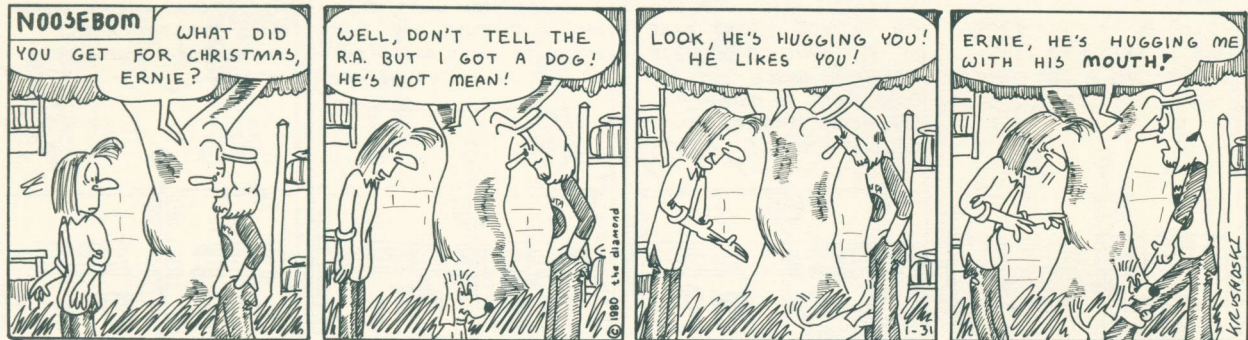
Nosebom and Dordt have always been synonymous. Nosebom needed Dordt College for his existence, and I would like to believe that Dordt would have been a little less of what it is now without Nosebom.

My first efforts with Nosebom was to just have a simple comic strip with absurd character types that everyone could get to know and laugh at. Unfortunately my brain (contrary to popular opinion) works faster than the printed process of the Diamond, which, at that time, was only bi-weekly.

With that failure I reverted to political comment, I turned to satirizing Dordt situations.



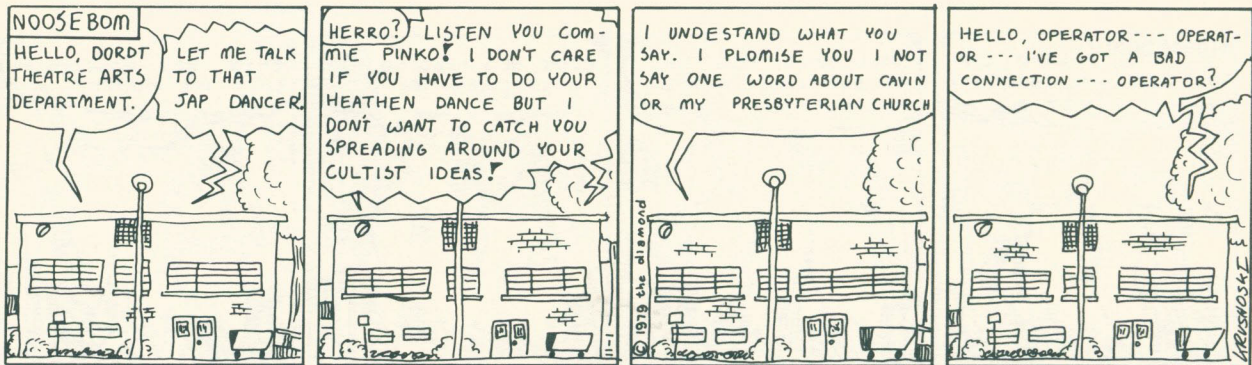
I soon learned that Dordt College is not a place that is bursting with controversy, so once more I depended on my character types to carry a joke. One character which I refused to let sit in my mind without showing him to the world was Ralph, the only dog allowed on campus, much to the detriment of legs everywhere.



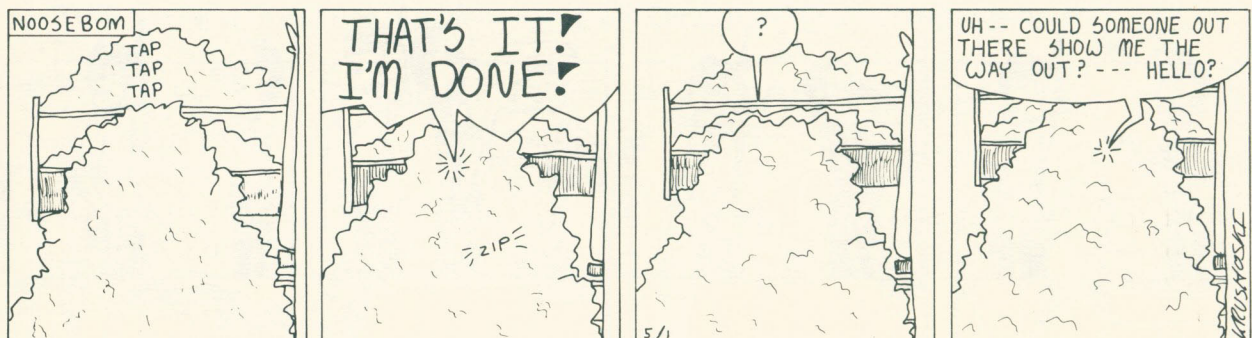
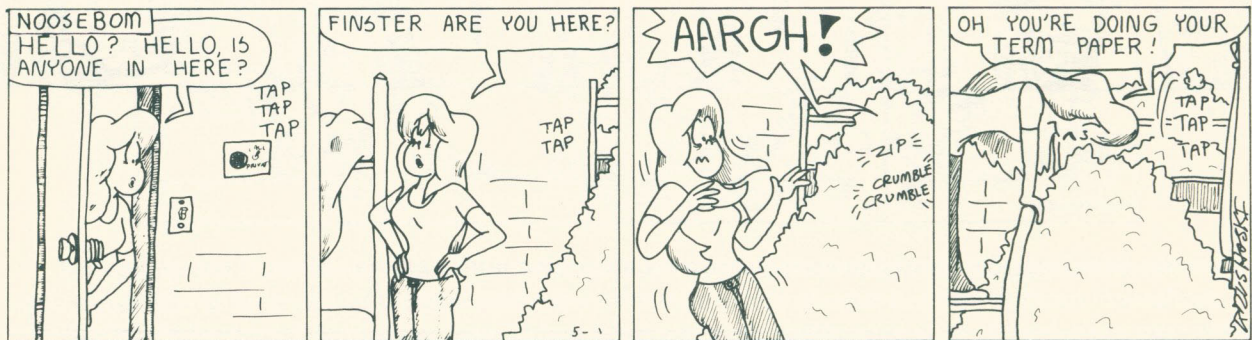
Noosebom began his sophomore year in a typical sophomoric fashion.



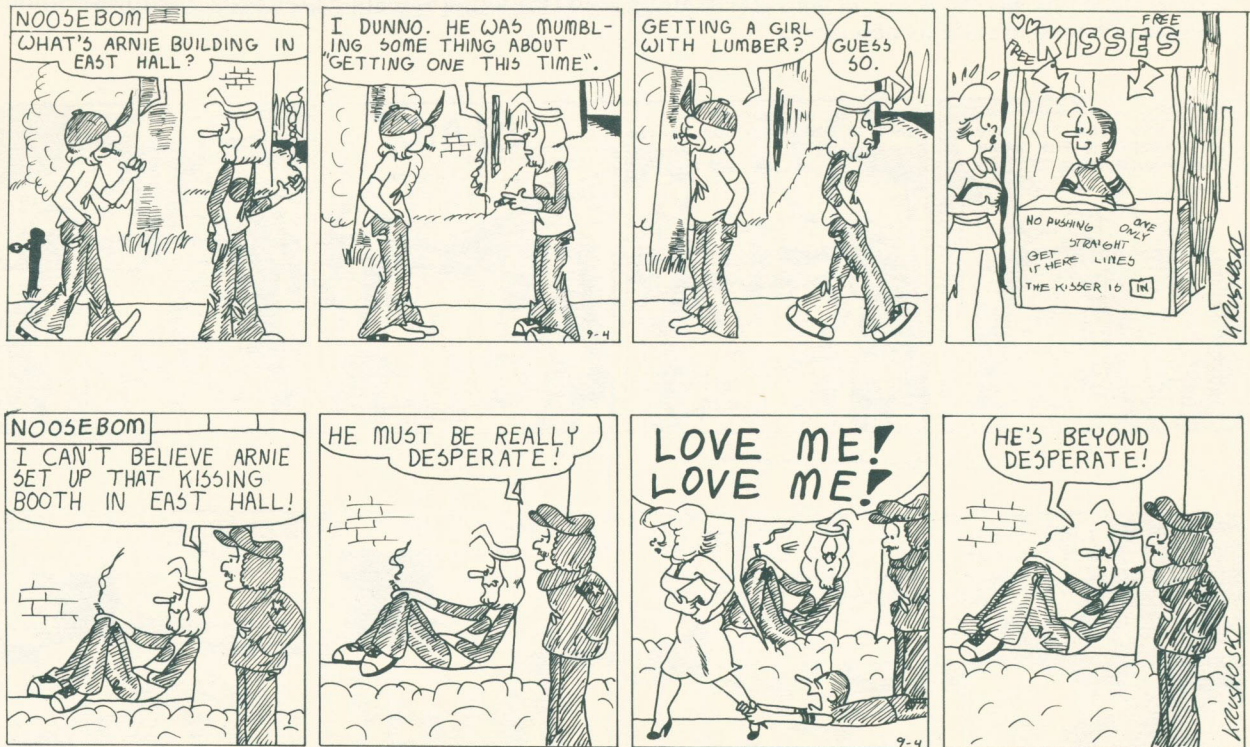
In the '79-'80 school year the Theatre Department brought in a Japanese Kabuki dancer to display her art to the community. The only response that was evoked was one of dismay at the idea of Dordt supporting a Buddhist. As it turned out the woman was Presbyterian. The next cartoon was based on an actual phone call.



Noosebom ended his second year dealing with "term paper frustration."

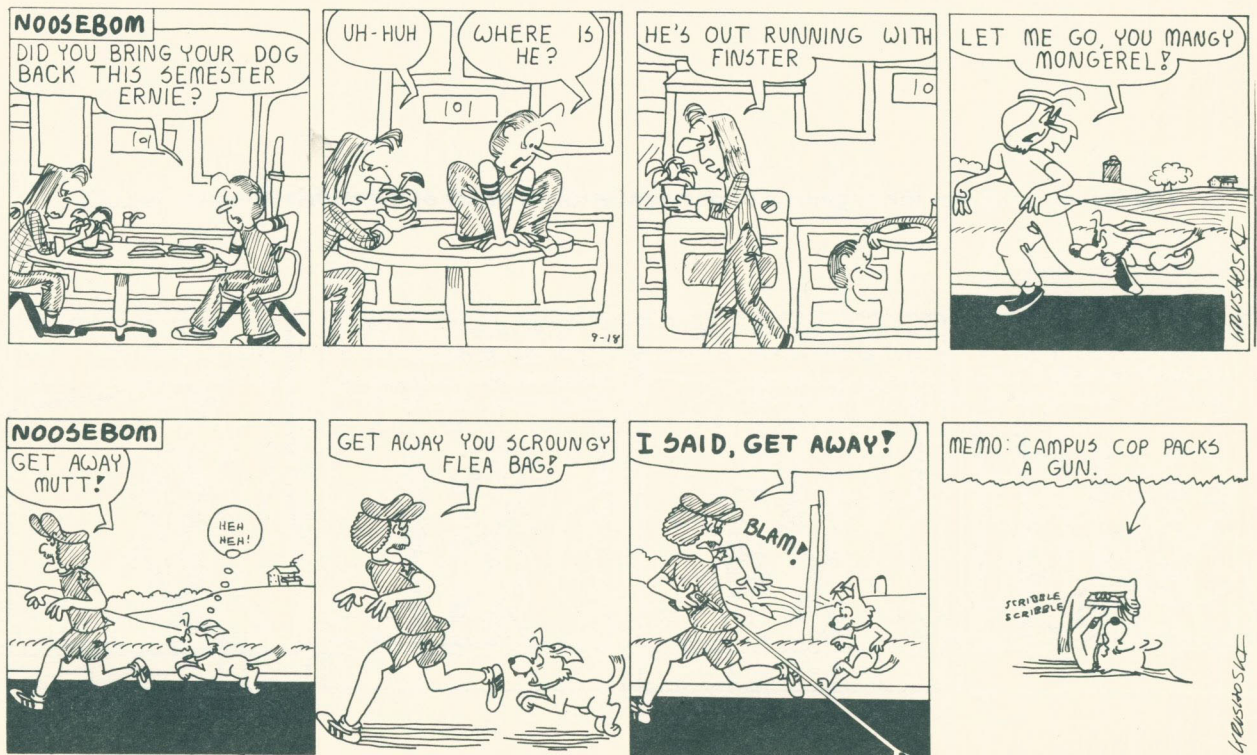


The '80-'81 year began with Noosebom's frustration with women.

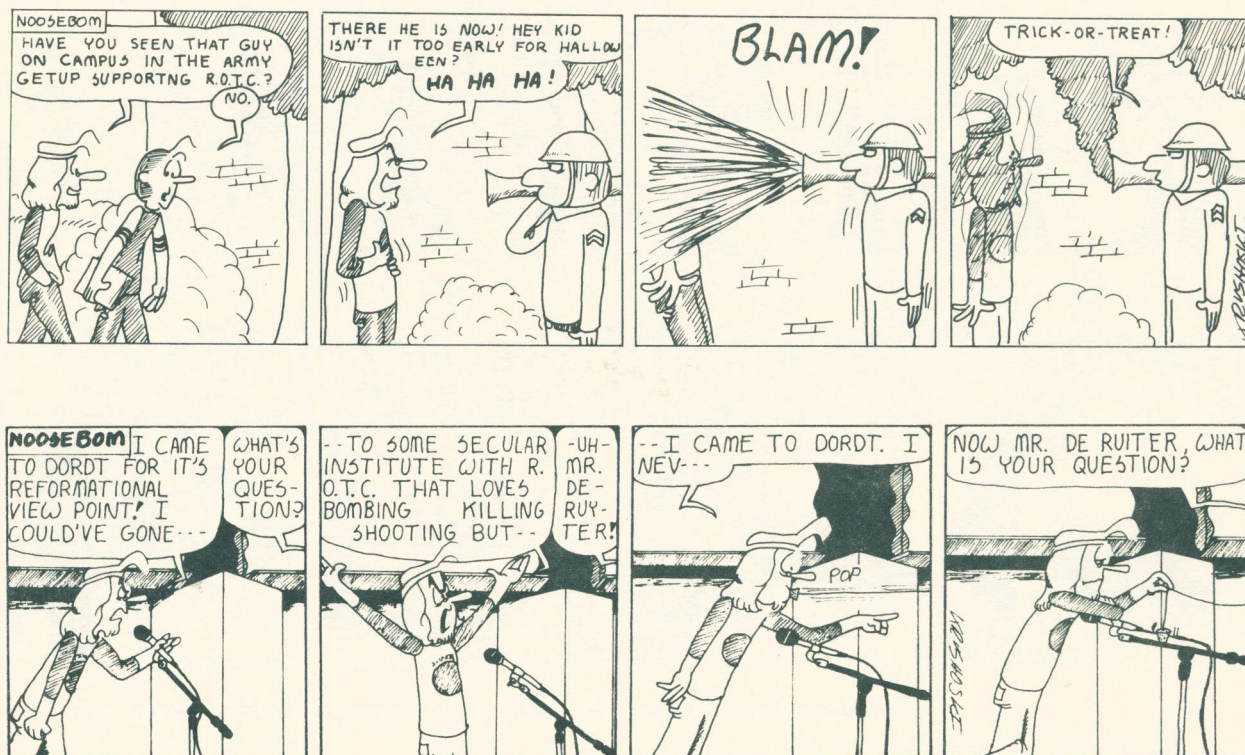


He never quite succeeded.

The next subject dealt with was jogging. Ralph seemed to be the perfect jogger's bane.



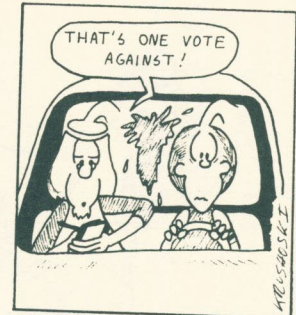
Of the issues of the year R.O.T.C. was the first. I felt that this time I should be fair and speak to both sides of the issue, against R.O.T.C. and against those who continued screaming the program down without giving it a chance to state its objectives.



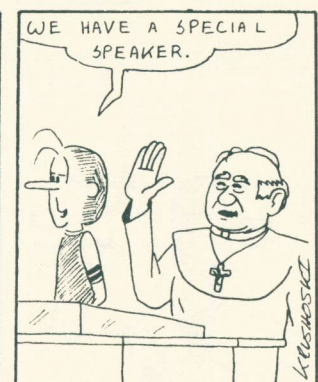
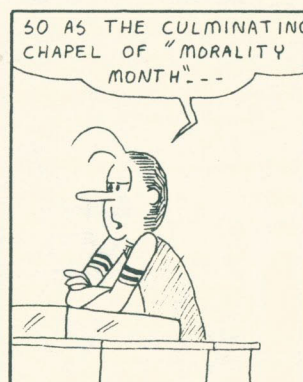
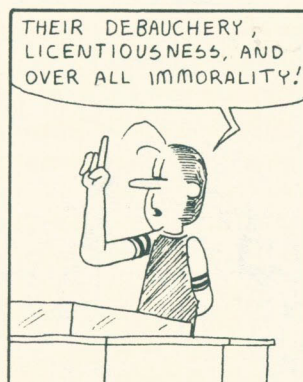
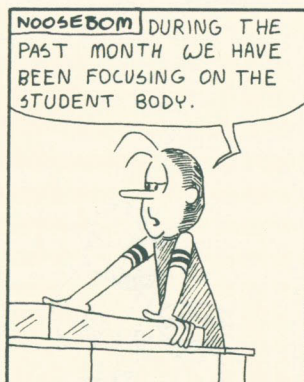
The second issue was the beginning of our wonderful seminary of the midwest.



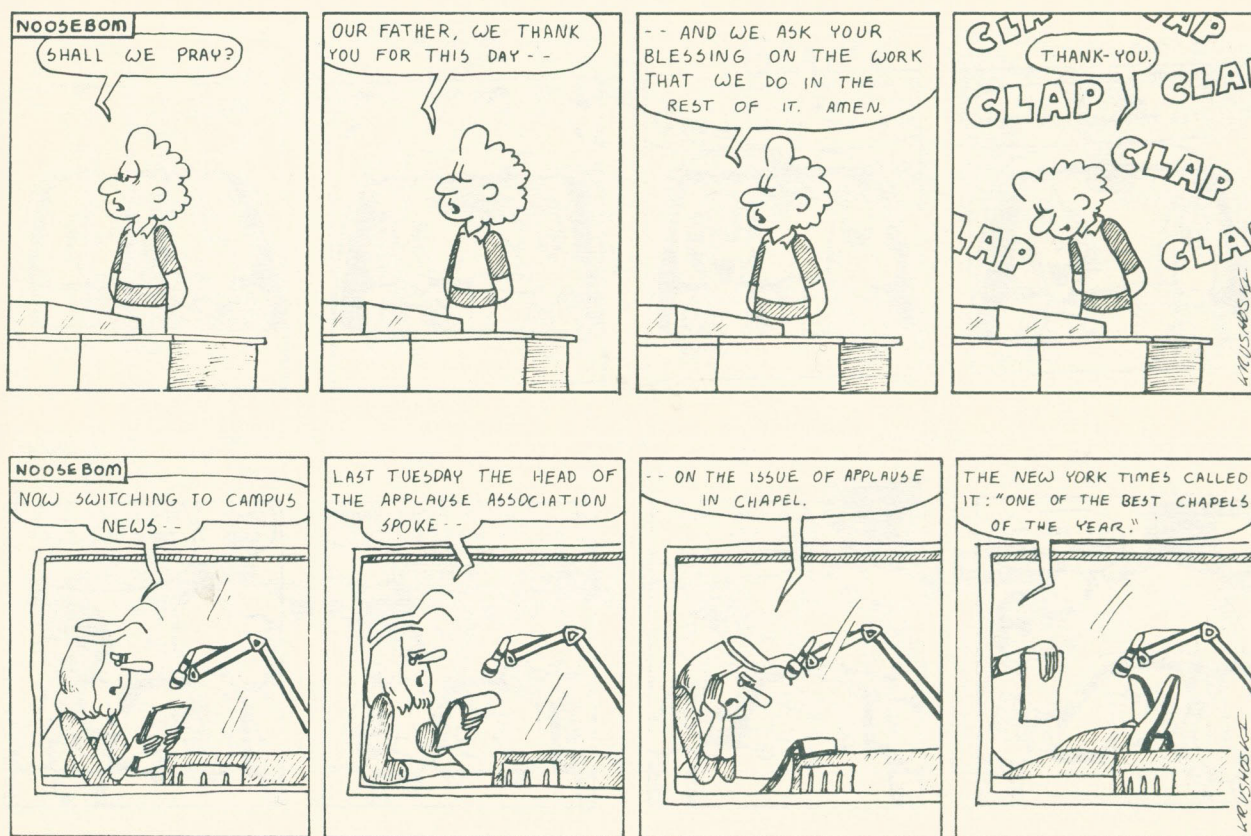
Noosebom came back his last year fully unprepared for his final bout with northwest Iowa.



Chapel seemed to be the issue of the '81-'82 year.



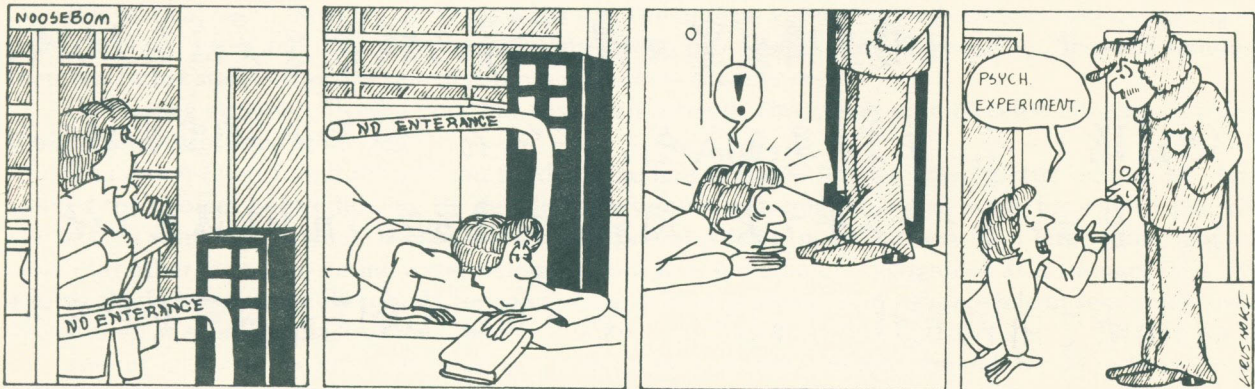
The man in the final frame was a feeble attempt at a caricature of the Pope. Noosebom turned to the applause issue next.



And to the issue of swearing.



Once more he became enthralled with the book detector and the various forms of smuggling that people will stoop to.



In Noosebom's four years there was never a direct name reference to actual Dordt faculty or staff members, nor were their faces ever shown, no matter how feebly it could have been executed. But finally in '82 Mr. Dale Grotenhuis poked his head in for a pre-tour comment to the choir.



There have been other comics that have not been included because of lack of space or lack of humor in the comic. In Noosebom's four year run he never quite grew to the proportions that he was capable of growing to. Yet if Noosebom has brightened the pages of the Diamond and made people more willing to read it then Noosebom has served his purpose. Even though Noosebom is finished here at Dordt he will hopefully live in the memories of the students he has come in contact with.

Of Ancient Times

一天，阿凡提走得又累又渴，碰巧钱袋里又没有多少钱。他躊躇了一会，决定去买西瓜吃。当他在一家西瓜棚里买好了西瓜，选了一张大桌子坐下来，同桌也在吃西瓜的几个人认出了他。他们决定开阿凡提一个玩笑。他们^把自己吃剩下的瓜子和瓜皮都不约而同地扔到阿凡提这边来，并装作若无其事的样子。

等到吃得差不多的时候，阿凡提面前的瓜皮已经堆得象座小山。这时阿凡提对面的一个人站起身来，指着那一堆西瓜皮大声地说：“阿凡提先生，你一定饿得十分厉害。瞧！你一个人吃下去的西瓜足够我们好几个人吃的。”周围的人跟着大笑起来。

阿凡提慢慢地站起来，掏出一块手帕轻轻地擦了擦嘴，然后对他们说：“你们几个人一定比我饿得更厉害。我总算只是吃西瓜，而你们几位连西瓜皮和西瓜子都没舍得留下。”说罢走出了西瓜棚。

The English was translated from the Chinese. These stories are common to all Chinese, not just from the city of Peking where Peter Wu was born.

Translation done by Peter Wu. Mike Dykstra wrote it up.

and Distant Places

Michael Dykstra (Fr.)

Undecided major

It is festival night, the night all China waits for. The orange, yellow and red lanterns light up the night as my brother, sister and I are seated around my father, listening to stories of ancient China and famous men. My father starts off with a tale of A-fan-ti, one of my favorite men.

Once, long ago there lived a poor but wise man A-fan-ti. This clever man traveled all across China, looking for wisdom and knowledge.

One day A-fan-ti found himself too tired and hungry to travel further. Having little money, he considered the choices before buying. He decided to try some watermelon and so made his way to a small stall which sold that product. Having procured his meal A-fan-ti made his way to a large table, 'round which sat other men, also eating watermelon. A-fan-ti was immediately recognized as a stranger. This, of course, made A-fan-ti a likely subject for a joke. Sure enough within minutes a large pile of seeds and rinds had formed at A-fan-ti's place at the table.

The instigator of the plot, seeing all was ready, stood up and said loud enough for all to hear: "You certainly have come a long way my friend, for you eat enough for many men." The men at the table laughed.

A-fan-ti rose slowly from his seat. He drew a cloth to wipe his face and said: "Not as long a way as you men, for I eat only the melon whereas you eat the rinds and pits also."

A light wind plays with our hair. It swings the lanterns slowly, creating and destroying huge monsters and delightful, friendly creatures. We've all moved closer together for the breeze is not warm. My father starts, once again, with the magical name of A-fan-ti.

A-fan-ti plodded along the road. He knew he was near a large city by the increased traffic. His eye caught the strange sight of a man crying; on this the market day. "What is the matter?" A-fan-ti asked.

The slave answered, "Would you not be sad if you knew you were to die for no reason?"

"Come now," said A-fan-ti, "No man dies for no reason."

"Then no man has as cruel a master as I."

"How so?"

"My master is very cruel. Last week he called me to him and said, the slave changed his voice to one of cruel mocking, "Slave, your task is to put this large jar inside of this small jar, you must do it in a week or die."

"Ah," muttered A-fan-ti, "let us go see this master of yours then." So A-fan-ti and the slave made their way to the master's house.

"Sir," said A-fan-ti, "your slave has told me this task and I wish to help him with it."

"Very well," sneered the cruel master, eager to see this poor, shabby traveler make a fool of himself. "If you succeed, this slave will go free. Now, let me see you do it."

At this A-fan-ti strode forward and lifted the heavy jar. With a smile, he dropped it on the hard floor. The cruel master stared dumbly as the slave and the traveler picked up the shattered pieces and easily placed them all in the small jar.

I can no longer hear the birds, only the frogs continue in destroying the silence of the night air. Their croaking mingles lazily with the soft rustle of breeze-blown leaves. "Another of A-fan-ti?" asks my brother hopefully.

"No," my father answered, "China has many famous men besides A-fan-ti."

Once, in the time of the warring states (475-220, B.C.) there were two neighbouring states. One was a very powerful state while the other was much weaker. One day the powerful king Lech called the king of Dech to his castle for a visit.

Dech's arrival was the occasion for a great parade. Lech in his royal robes led, followed by his army. Behind the army came Dech with his small escort. The parade made its way through the town and came, at last, to the castle of Lech.

When Dech arrived at the great gate of Lech he found his way barred. "You are not to enter through the grand gate of Lech," said a guard. "Rather, persons of your stature are to enter through the side door."

Dech walked around the castle to the small door and stopped. After looking at the door he spoke just loud enough for the snickering Lech to hear. "If one wished to enter a doghouse, he must enter through the door of that doghouse." With that Dech strutted proudly through the door.

Looking at the sky makes me wish for tomorrow, for the shining moon and visible stars promised great things. At the same time I wish the night, with its swaying lanterns and soft sounds would continue, forever. My father, however, solves my dilemma: "One more story" he said. We're all too tired to protest.

During the time of the warring states there were two states, Lu and Chu. These states were separated by a great sea. Lu, the northern state, was much stronger than Chu.

One day, an ambassador of Chu was sent to Lu, that he might attempt to avert a war between these two states. He was welcomed in the usual manner. However, soon after his arrival, the soldiers of Lu brought in a thief for judgement. The thief confessed that he had come from the country of Chu.

The king of Lu sent for the ambassador of Chu. When this official arrived he was asked: "Do all the people make a living as a thief?"

The ambassador looked at the king. "In our country grow many trees which produce magnificent oranges. These oranges are beautifully round and of a texture not easily found in other places. In spite of this they also taste excellent. If these same trees are planted in Lu they grow beautiful fruits. However, when one bites into these fruits he will find them rotten. And so it is with our people, when we must live in your country we remain Chuan on the outside but on the inside we become rotten because of the atmosphere." The ambassador then left the country.

It was not long before the two states were at war.

Even the frogs are silent. The lanterns are all out except for those needed to light the path. The wind is nothing but a tickle, a whisper, if one cares to listen that hard. And I, I am tired with the fatigue that comes slowly and lingers, not totally desired, yet not totally unwanted. Already my head is filled with images of ancient times and distant places.

Judy Cook (Sr.)
Psych. major



Shot of Love

Record Review

Almost a year after its release, Bob Dylan's most recent album has not yet received the credit it deserves. The credit hasn't been given because it was not paid enough attention. The album certainly warrants consideration from listeners, especially Dylan fans, because it contains some interesting developments and non-developments in his writing, resulting in his best and possibly his worst work ever done—not to mention the "everything in between."

The unfortunate consequence of any Dylan album review is that many people will not even read it because they refuse to listen to him sing. Such people should stop right here, because his singing style has not changed, his nasal whine has not been toned down to make it more commercially acceptable; no, Dylan is still at his usual best, wailing and moaning much more than just one note.

Dylan has done much with repetition on this album. In his song-writing, several are of the same almost formula- or list-type songs as "Gotta Serve Somebody." Almost all the lines in the title song begin "Don't need. . .," with the chorus "I need a shot of love" to bring the progression around to the beginning again. "Property of Jesus" and "Lenny Bruce" also follow this structure, though they are richer silos of more potent lines.

"Property of Jesus," in spite of its simplicity, or perhaps through it, conveys a mature understanding of the security of the body of Christ. It is directed at unbelievers with an audacious defiance to the temptations and traps of Satan, who, it seems, will never steal the singer's courage.

"Lenny Bruce" is a sombre elegy to a comedian for whom Dylan obviously had much respect. "Lenny Bruce is dead. He was the brother that you never had." It is encouraging to see Dylan writing a lament for a figure who was often so lewd and, later in his career, so blasphemous; it may be simple in form, and the picture he paints may be a better one than truth would paint, but it also shows a compassion and depth often lacking on his two previous albums.

Several of the songs are musically repetitive as well, more than is desirable. "Shot of Love," "Dead Man, Dead Man," and "Trouble" all fall into this misdemeanor, taking much too long to fade out, and "Heart of Mine," on top of this, also plays through verses without vocals or instrumental solos to fill the space. The music though interesting, just doesn't carry it.

Most of the songs repeat each other musically; that is, four of the songs have one or two partners that sound much like them. This leaves only "Heart of Mine" to sound unique.

Both "In the Summertime" and "Every Grain of Sand" are slower, more restful tunes, both with appropriate harmonica parts in them. "Property of Jesus" and "Watered-Down Love" sound very similar in their chord progressions and in the busy-ness of the instruments used. The title song, "Dead Man, Dead Man," and "Trouble" career with similar raucous energies. Even "Lenny Bruce" is like the former pair in mood.

Side two contains incredible juxtapositions of worst and best. "Dead Man, Dead Man" is an outright flop. You can listen to it and be embarrassed for Dylan, or wish someone else had done it. "In the Summertime" is pleasant, reflective, and has some creative lines. "Trouble" is, again, exactly that: it takes much getting used to.

Finally, "Every Grain of Sand" is as good as the first is bad, and better; it is simply Dylan's most beautiful song. Its lines are penetrating; it cuts deep and does not draw blood, but rather injects an oceanic serum of perseverance. It sings of much danger of trial, doubt, and fear, but always comes back to the assurance "that every hair is numbered. . . like every sparrow falling, like every grain of sand." The song suggests the image of a mother rocking her young son in her arms to comfort him; it is so intensely beautiful.

With the consideration now paid to it, and its faults and strengths discussed, the album can be left alone to stand on its own, and be forgotten, if that is its destiny. But something significant would be lost if that is what's in store for "Shot of Love." In spite of its shortcomings, it is an important milestone for Dylan because he showed his faith to be much deeper and more real than the comic-book album cover. And he showed he could sing about his faith without being didactic, but artistic about it.

Brian Deheer (Sr.)
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Movie Review

Chariots of Fire

Flame of Hope

Dodi Fayed - Executive Producer
Produced by David Puttnam
Directed by Hugh Hudson
Screenplay Colin Welland
Music by Vangelis Papathanassiou

An **Inspirational Films** presentation of a **Ladd Company & Warner Bros.** release.

During World War II, in a Japanese prison camp in China, a devout Scottish Protestant missionary died. His name was Eric Liddell. In 1978 in England a Jewish lawyer and respected athletic leader died. His name was Harold Abrahams. What could these two men have had in common? In the early 1920's Liddell and Abrahams emerged as renowned British track stars. Both men won a gold medal at the 1924 Paris Olympics. In 1982 the flame of life which burned in the hearts of these two men has sparked a new torch of triumph—*Chariots of Fire*.

Chariots of Fire traces the paths blazed by Liddell and Abrahams in the 1920's. On the track they were two of the fastest men in the world. Yet they lived two distinctly opposite lives. *Chariots of Fire* reveals their similarities and differences within the framework of a common struggle: to find meaning and purpose in life. The movie pictures reality as it is and embraces the human experience in its fullness. *Chariots of Fire* is a movie about two men; it is a movie about the whole human race.

The movie begins at a memorial service for Abrahams, but it quickly reverts to 1924 and pictures the British Olympic team running along a beach. The subtle magnetism of Vangelis' score draws and pulls us into the scene. *Chariots of Fire* is an experience—an experience in supreme art. Technical excellence opens the door and invites us into this experience. The grabbing cinematography takes us around Cambridge's gothic quadrangle in a college dash; it relives race after race in slow motion telling the story of triumph—with all its pain, suspense, and elation—in the faces and bodies of the runners. We feel an experience which defies description. Instead, Vangelis' score of synthesized music interprets the story and keeps the many races bearable and even fascinating.

As the story develops, a skillfully written script unfolds. With a reserved power it says only what it must to succeed. Impartiality and restrained understatement make the movie's overt didacticism credible. The story moves deliberately, beginning a little too slowly. The two parallel story lines, at first glance, are tangled early in the movie. The transitions require a patient effort to pierce together two incongruent expositions.

Much of this confusion results from an American audience's unfamiliarity with the scene and time-setting. Producers Fayed and Puttnam attend to intricate detail so carefully that the movie functions on one level as historical documentary. *Chariots of Fire* LIVES in the picturesque Scottish countryside, in the halls of Cambridge, in British concert halls and classy restaurants. Authentic costumes and accents make the story believable. But it is so authentic an American audience can not immediately identify with this slice of history, and therefore the audience suffers in the opening moments. Once the frustrations are overcome, however, the authenticity stirs a sense of curious awe and appreciation.

All these details are just the icing on the cake. The real heart of the show lies in the gutsy truths of life amplified through the characters. We see convincing performances from a cast virtually unknown to an American big-picture audience. And, *Chariots of Fire* is highlighted by unique and real characters like Sam Mussabini, with his cigar and straw hat whom Abrahams hires as trainer; Mussabini personifies rigorous individualism. Jennie Liddell conveys a motherly concern for brother Eric. Chivalrous Lord Kindsie makes a memorable gesture of self-sacrifice. Stoic Lord Kedogen steals a climactic scene with a mere three lines. Shuly, who runs for America, literally takes his hat off to no one. These characters steal your sympathy and love or suffer your contempt, but they win your memories.

Against this backdrop Hal Abrahams (Ben Cross) and Eric Liddell (Ian Chareson) appear as startling contrasts who seem to oppose each other from the roles of villain and hero. Such a competition never materializes. Abrahams runs to win—"I don't run to lose; if I can't win, I won't run." Liddell also runs to win. But really *Chariots of Fire* is not so concerned with winning. Both men are running for something far more serious than winning, and they aren't running against each other. For Abrahams running is a "weapon—a weapon against being a Jew." As Lord Lindsay comments, "Abrahams thinks the whole world is against him and now he has a chance to prove himself." He has a chance to be the greatest man in the world—to go down in history as #1. "That to Abrahams is immortality. It's a matter of life and death."

Liddell's motives contrast sharply to Abrahams' individualistic aspirations. "I know I'm pleasing God when I run," he tells his sister. "I believe God made me for a purpose: to go to China. But he also made me fast. To not run would be to hold God in contempt." Running, as the movie states, is an extension of Liddell's life, of his driving force. When the world tries to separate his running from his life, we see the real villain of the story. Abrahams and Liddell struggle against the establishment: a society which threatens Abraham's integrity with social prejudice and on the Olympic Committee which questions Liddell's life convictions.

The development of these roles, however, is a witness of the movie. What we see of these two men leaves us with few doubts, but what we don't see detracts from their characters. We see only subtle hints, but no concrete examples as to why Abrahams is so bitter. His bitterness is not justified in the movie and comes off as the misunderstandings of a paranoid Jew. Likewise, we wonder why Liddell's faith grew so strong to the point that he is almost too perfect.

But these elements do not detract from the full impact of the movie. As *Campus Life's* Jim Long says, there's something here that "brings out the greedy aesthetics in us: the better it is, the better we want it to be." *Chariots of Fire* is concerned with far more than just two men. It is concerned with the whole human race and a full and true picture of the human condition. In this regard, *Chariots of Fire* succeeds more fully than most movies can hope to, because its picture of reality reflects a Biblical understanding of reality. *Chariots of Fire* pictures man as a religious and communal creature. It struggles with the antithesis as man searches to find the meaning of life. God is presented as a "benign, loving dictator," but man still has free choice, as one character says, "No one is forcing you to follow him."

At the same time *Chariots of Fire* offers insights into the consequences of the choice. Liddell chooses to follow God and this hope drives his life forward with meaning and happiness. Abrahams chooses individual success and personal glory, but admits to himself the consequence of this choice: "Contentment, that's the secret. I'm 24 and I've never known it." But *Chariots of Fire* only pictures reality as it honestly is. It passes judgements but it understands why the two men made the choices they did and it points no finger of accusation at either one. It is refreshing to see a movie which respects a Christian's beliefs; but it is equally refreshing to see that the same movie respects the struggles and integrity of a non-Christian. We sympathize with both men, because the movie treats both men with honor.

Herein lies the special quality of this movie—that flame which makes *Chariots of Fire* a torch of triumph. It is not unique because it presents a Christian perspective. Many movies have attempted this and failed. What makes *Chariots of Fire* special is that it is first and last a piece of art. It does not aim to evangelize, but attempts to shed some light on what being human is all about. It allows these insights to speak for themselves. Liddell's most compelling speech, early in the movie, characterizes the entire motion picture: "I'd like to compare faith to running a race. When the winner breaks the tape, you experience elation. But then you go home and your dinner is burned or maybe you haven't got a job. So who am I to tell you to have faith in the face of life's harsh realities. I want to give you something more permanent, but all I can do is point the way. So from where does the strength come to finish the race? From within." *Chariots of Fire* wants to give us something more permanent, but realizes that if any person is ever to run the race of faith, that decision and the strength to run must come from within her/his own heart. *Chariots of Fire* points the way to faith in God. It also points to what art was created to be. It is an expression of what it means to be human. In only pointing the way, *Chariots of Fire* gives us something so permanent it will burn in our hearts for a lifetime.

Early in the movie one of the characters says to Liddell, "What we need is a muscular Christian—someone to make 'em sit up and take notice." For Christians this is the significance of *Chariots of Fire*. We need muscular Christians. We need muscular Christian artists who create art that makes the world sit up and take notice! *Chariots of Fire* is one piece of art that has made the world take notice.

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On April 30 and May 3, 1982, Maurice Maeterlinck's Symbolist drama, *The Intruder*, will be produced in NWT. This brief summary of the Symbolist movement will provide a background for the viewing of this play. One of the most important things to remember about *The Intruder* is that it must be approached from the viewpoint of the Symbolist movement. This movement grew out of a strong reaction against naturalism and realism, both of which were predominant philosophical and artistic motifs of the 19th century. The members of this movement were dissidents. Coming out of the radical Romanticist movement of the late 1800's, they were officially called Decadents by the conservative snobs of the day.

In Anticipation of

The Intruder

The predominant attitudes held by the conservatives were scientific, rationalistic, and out-spokenly empiricist. Naturalism and realism were the proud vanguards of these attitudes, and had matured as direct descendents of the Renaissance and Enlightenment way of thinking: they represented Reason in its capitalized form. Truth was seen as something tangible, and its attainment the result of careful observation and perceptive application of the senses. Objectivity was considered to be the norm, and hardline representation the logical result in the realm of Art. Emile Zola was the central literary prophet of naturalistic ideas, and his fame reflected their popularity. The production of art was also seen as being very mechanical, restricted by various rules and expectations that determined what was acceptable and what was not. Although the art that grew out of this school of thought was very interesting in itself, it left many artists cold and dissatisfied. Its objective and rigid one-sidedness caused many of them to look elsewhere for a new artistic motive.

Symbolism was a way of saying 'no' to a number of things which were contemporary with itself. In particular, it was a reaction not only against moralism and rationalism, but also against the crass materialism which prevailed in the 1880's; in the more narrowly literary sense it was a protest against the oppressive doctrines of Naturalism. . . .³

To these "protestors," Truth was seen as something much larger than what the senses could possibly apprehend. They accepted the romantic, transcendentalist assumption that the phenomenal world (concrete reality) is only a "shadow of an eternal, real world that exists beyond the grasp of man's senses."¹ This neoplatonic belief of theirs demanded a radical adaptation of the artistic medium. Form had to be made harmonious with content. Realistic characters, actions, or words were not capable of expressing the intuitions and insights that were mystically or transcendently arrived at.

The assumptions which underlay Symbolism lead us to formulate some such doctrine as the following: Every feeling or sensation we have, every moment of consciousness, is different from every other; and it is, in consequence, impossible to render our sensations as we actually experience them through the conventional and universal language of ordinary literature. Each poet has his unique personality; each of his moments has its special tone, its special combination of elements. And it is the poet's task to find, invent the special language which will alone be capable of expressing his personality and feelings. Such a language must make use of symbols: what is so special, so fleeting and so vague cannot be conveyed by direct statement or description, but only a succession of words, of images, which will serve to suggest it to the reader.²

This quite clearly demonstrates the rugged individualism so typical of romanticists, and the exaggerated emphasis on mystical insight. As a result, these artists felt it necessary to be freed from the rigour of realist rules for art. Instead, they set up imagination as the key principle for good art.

The validity and authority of the objectively perceived world having been called into doubt, subjectivity inevitably triumphed. Men now looked within themselves for guidance. . . . There grew up the myth of the 'genius,' the divinely inspired man whose unfettered imagination enabled him to transmute all his experiences and emotions into art, and who was excused, by reason of his gifts, from obedience to the normal rules; who must, indeed, refuse to submit to these in the interest of fulfilling himself.

The essence of the new doctrine, in artistic terms, was the primacy of the imagination.³

Stephane Mallarmé was probably the central poet and proponent of the symbolist movement.

To name an object is to do away with three-quarters of the enjoyment of the poem which is derived from the satisfaction of guessing little by little: to suggest it, to evoke it—that is what charms the imagination.⁴

It is clear that the symbol is not to be understood in the common way, that is, as something that stands for or represents something. Rather, it suggests, evokes, alludes. It does not denote, it connotes. This concept of symbol went so far as to be compared with the suggestiveness of music. As a result, Wagner's aesthetics also became an important factor in the developing of symbolist thought.

Symbolist artists often seem to aspire towards a musical method of organizing a composition, where images serve the same purpose as Wagner's Leitmotif. We may even go so far as to say that, while the connection between Symbolist artists and the Symbolist literary movement was usually a matter of ideas shared or borrowed quite deliberately from literature by the plastic artists, the sympathy between Symbolist artists and contemporary musicians was deep-rooted and instinctive.⁵

In addition to the use of symbol as a catalyst, Mallarmé also made use of other key aspects of symbolist art, such as deliberate ambiguity, and the notion that art exists alongside and not in the real world. Drama, according to Mallarmé, is "essentially a sacred and mysterious rite, which, through dream, reverie, allusion, and musicality, evoke the hidden, spiritual meanings of existence."⁶

Although this Symbolist movement in theater was a distinct departure from a realistic dramatic mode, it never developed into a lasting genre. To produce a play like *The Intruder*, then, is really to revive a forgotten or at least ignored type of theater. However exciting and necessary that may be, it is not easy in a culture which is as thoroughly indoctrinated by television-type-realism as ours is. Nevertheless, if we realize that this television realism is as highly stylized as the symbolism of Maeterlinck, maybe we can remain open to what the play has to offer, and in so doing stretch our dramatic versatility beyond the narrow confines of a single style.

Endnotes

¹Richard G. Wurtz, *Different Kinds of Drama* (Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1967), p. 38

²Edmund Wilson, *Axel's Castle* (1931; rpt. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1959), p. 21

³Edward Lucie-Smith, *Symbolist Art* (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1972), p. 23

⁴Wilson, p. 20

⁵Lucie-Smith, p. 61

⁶Oscar G. Brockett and Robert R. Findlay, *Century of Innovation: A History of European and American Theater and Drama Since 1870* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1973), p. 123

This summary is based on a term paper submitted for Modern Drama, April 24, 1981

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Russ Rowenhorst (So.)
Social Service major



As the Flower of the Field. . .

Flower smiled at ant
shepherding aphids on a blade of grass.

Ant sang
a working song:
gathering leaf cuttings,
digging new tunnels,
tending the colony's "sheep,"
guarding the burrow,
raising her majesty's children.
He sang of safety secured
in the labor of many hands.
Flower liked his confident song.

Wind whispered to ant
telling him to return.
The queen's gate keepers
would soon close the doors.
Sun retired early.

Now wind sang.
His cold but quiet dirge
surrounded the field.
He sang of darkness, of starless nights,
of sleepy burrows, of long, cold
hours when only the wind
marches the road.

Flower stopped smiling,
entranced. Tired and bent,
she folded her petals and slept.

As she lay in the field, wind
sang of the dawn to come.

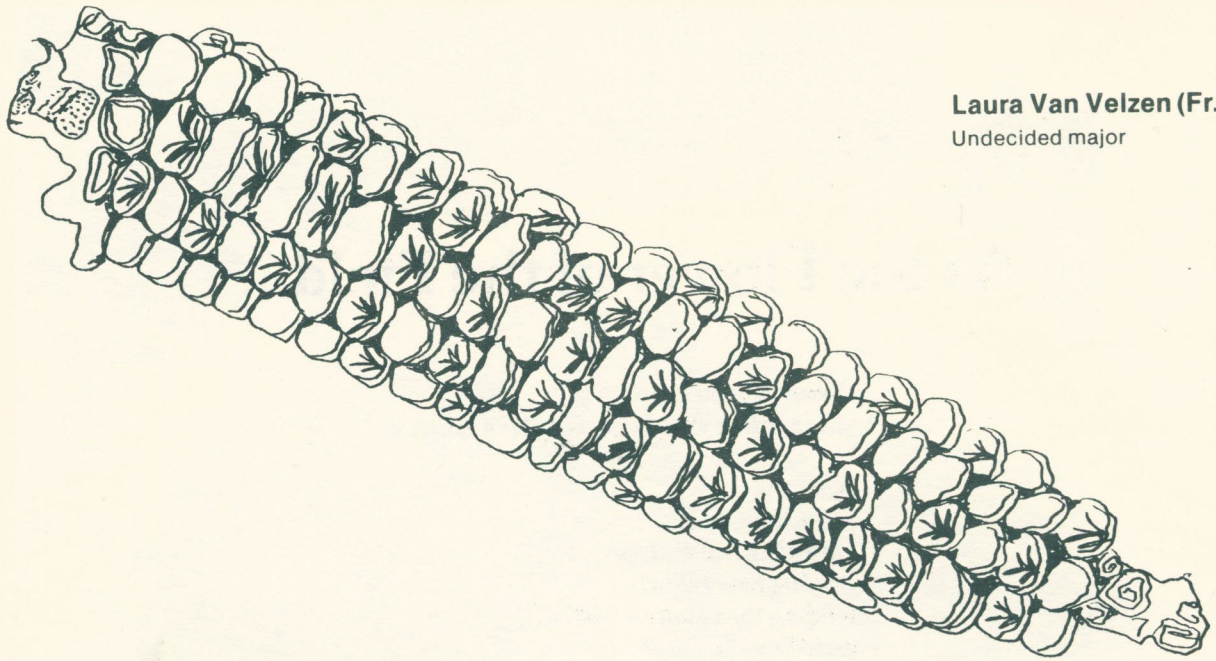
Jeff Alons

Theatre Arts major

Kent Kuipers

Kent Kuipers (Fr.)

Biology major



Laura Van Velzen (Fr.)

Undecided major

Sonnet to Lil Grissen

Upon Her Leaving Dordt College

March, 1982

"The Iowa Interlude" you'll call your climb
Up north—a summer in the August of
Your life, astay upon the knee of Time,
A working recess in a prairie cove.
In dreams you'll see the textured face of Haan,
The students shouting editorially
To purge the purple; or in days of sun
And joy, you'll hear the laughter and the glee
Of Jim, and see his smile, a glad applause
For lore or love. And we'll recall your voice—
Not fire or ice, but sunlight for the cause
That women too were born to have a choice.
Your life spoke louder than your words that worth
Does not depend on gender, age, or birth.

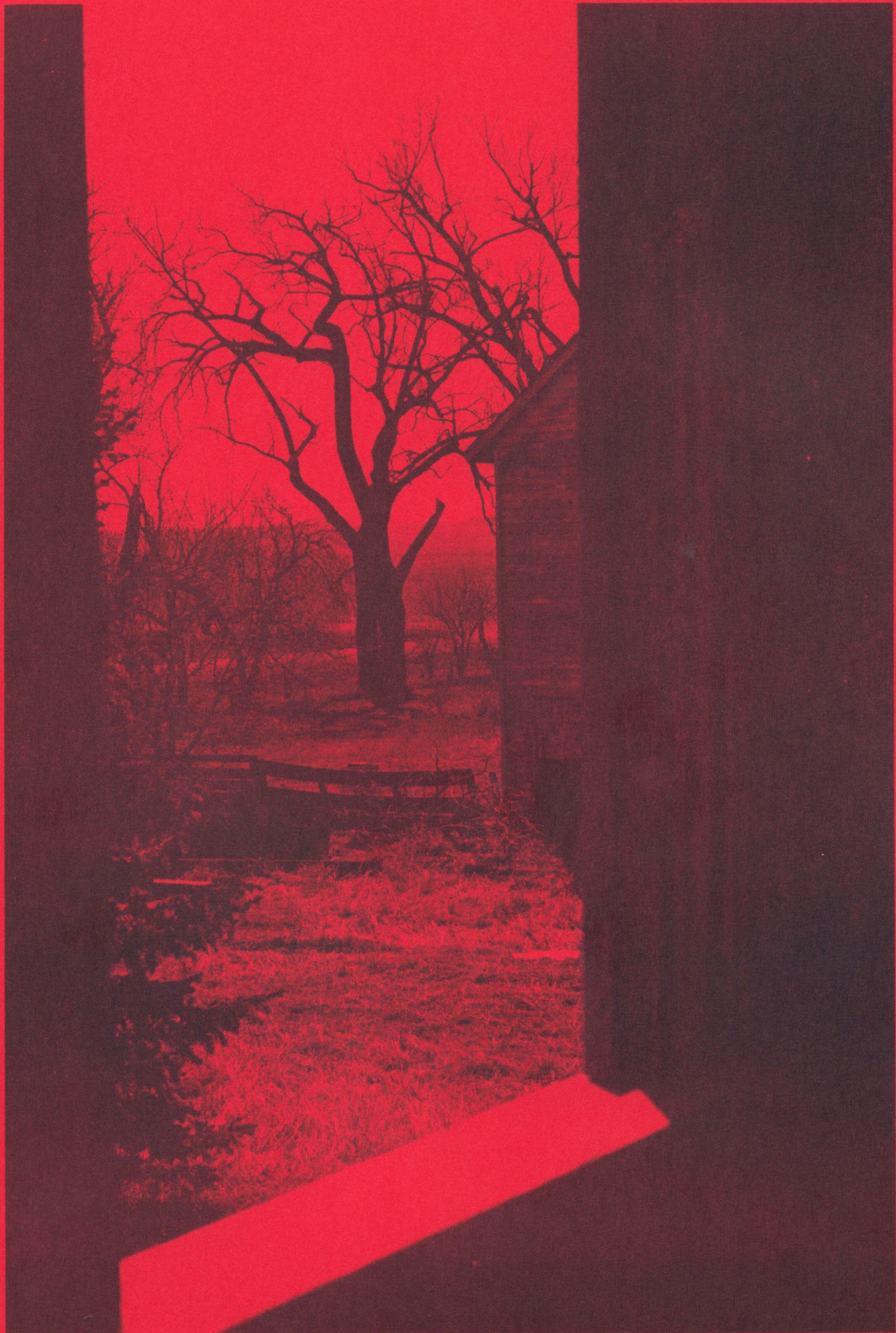
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